



# Department of Justice

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## **FORMER SALVADORAN OFFICIAL SENTENCED TO 29 YEARS**

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Former Salvadoran Congressman William Eliu Martinez was sentenced today to 29 years in prison by U.S. District Court Judge Michael M. Mihm in the District of Columbia.

This sentencing followed Martinez's trial on narcotics trafficking charges in June 2005. The two-count indictment charging Martinez was returned in October 2003. He was arrested by DEA agents in Panama in early November 2003. The jury in the District of Columbia convicted Martinez on June 27, 2005 after a two-and-a-half week-long trial.

Department of Justice prosecutors, working with DEA agents in the United States and overseas, attributed tons of cocaine shipments into the United States to the Otto Herrera Drug Trafficking Organization, the trafficking group for which Martinez ran operations in El Salvador, beginning in 1998.

Martinez, a former Alternate Congressman in El Salvador, purchased boats, rented properties, and recruited workers used to transport large amounts of cocaine through El Salvador into Guatemala and to the United States. Evidence at his trial showed that he sometimes used his office to further the organization's trafficking activities.

Investigators and prosecutors on this case enjoyed strong support from the government of El Salvador. Department of Justice trial attorneys Michael Mota, Patrick Hearn and James Faulkner prosecuted this case in federal district court. The attorneys are part of the Criminal Division's Narcotic and Dangerous Drug Section.

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